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ABSTRACT

The Single Parent/Homemaker Center, located at Hopkinsville Community College (Kentucky), provided immediate outreach and referral services to single parents and displaced homemakers between July 1989 and June 1990. The following services were offered to participants: personal and academic counseling, resume and interviewing workshops, referral services, workshops and seminars, occupational and interest testing, and employment referrals. The center also assisted qualified participants with training and independent living skills, individualized goals/life plans, exploration of nontraditional options, and alcohol/drug awareness workshops. The center served 123 women and 3 men. Plans were made to include a child-care facility for the following year so that single parents can participate in workshops. (The following attachments are included: a poem, "Memories of Jeffrey"; "Positive Thinker"; and letters from four participants.) (NLA)

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ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

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PROGRAM TYPE: Single Parent/Homemaker
PROGRAM TITLE: Creative Horizons

PROJECT DIRECTORS: Joyce Boren, Gail Deatherage

AGENCY/INSTITUTION: Hopkinsville Community College
P.O. Box 2100
Hopkinsville, KY 42240

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT For the period of July 1, 1989 to June 30, 1990

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RATIONALE:

The Single Parent/Homemaker Center, located at Hopkinsville Community College, provided immediate outreach and referral services to participants (male or female) who qualified as single parents or homemakers during the period of July 1, 1989 through June 30, 1990. The center was committed to serving as a resource center and providing life skills for single parents and homemakers. To obtain self-sufficiency, participants must have a clear direction in relation to their life objectives as well as their educational and career plans. The center provided programs during this year which were designed to meet the special needs of our single parents and homemakers in our community and counties within the service area.

The services offered to those eligible participants have had an impact on their decision to seek additional training or secure employment in this community as well as in the surrounding area. Participants have benefited greatly due to the efforts of our staff which provided opportunities for single parents and homemakers to obtain marketable skills and enter the job market. Additionally participants were encouraged to explore a variety of non-traditional career options.

An increasing number of single parents/homemakers within the region is due largely to the rising population of minority parents who are responsible for dependent children. Many of these individuals receive welfare and other public assistance. Consequently, the center surveyed the surrounding service area to determine target counties most in need. A large majority of the individuals in these counties have received welfare for several generations. In an attempt to break this cycle, this group of people must be educated. The services that our center offered this year should promote a positive change in the cycle.

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OBJECTIVES:

Participant assistance services available include personal and academic counseling, resume and interviewing workshops, referral services, workshops and seminars, occupational and interest testing, and employment referrals. Our primary objective is to provide support centers for single parents and homemakers in our county as well as the surrounding counties. This objective has been accomplished by providing the first of the two-week workshops in Todd County targeted as an area most in need.

The second two-week workshop was conducted at Hopkinsville Community College which was implemented in conjunction with the six-week workshop.

It was the focus of the center to assist qualified participants who need training and life skills necessary for self-sufficiency. Outreach services were prioritized to serve first the counties with overall high poverty, unemployment and literacy statistics. The assistance is offered in forms of counseling and employability skills classes especially designed for the single parent/homemaker. In addition, it is the focus of the center to assist participants in developing individualized goals and life plans. Participants will be encouraged to explore non-traditional options. An important program objective is to provide alcohol and drug awareness workshops for participants in relation to them and their family members.

ACTIVITIES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The year was a very busy one for our staff in the single parent/homemaker center. We served 123 women and 3 men this year. Of these 123 who completed the program, 40 are enrolled in Hopkinsville Community College, 80 completed a short term training program and many of this number are placed in employment at an average of $5.81 an hour. Of those enrolled at Hopkinsville Community College, five completed the nursing program and have been placed at an average of $10.00 per hour. The business administration program has been very successful for many of our participants. During the year, 15 were enrolled and many of these are placed in productive employment in the area.

Beginning in October 1989, Dr. L. Darryl Armstrong conducted a series of workshops for our participants. The topics included the following: Unlimited Power: The Science of Personal Achievement, The Psychology of Self, The Ten Strengths of the Psychology of Winning, To Access the Inner Winner, Relationship Strategies, Dealing with Differences, Handling Stress, Teamworking For a Job, Visualizing Self Esteem, Handling Anxiety, Stop Smoking/Lose Weight.

Also in October a workshop was conducted entitled "Home Based Business, Ideas for Action". Several single parents and homemakers have indicated they will benefit from this training.

The two-week workshops have been completed as of June 30, 1990 with a total number of participants served at 32. Focus for the 32 participants who successfully completed the program were: Who are you? Where are you going? Do you want to get there? What steps will you need to take?

The workshops' training was both didactic and experiential; the participants appeared to have blended well and be supportive during small group work. Training topics were centered around lecture, discussion, films and small group processing. Emphasis was placed upon on-going issues of self-evaluating career and personal decision making. In addition, participants were given the Kuder as well as the Self-Directed Search, which is a guide to educational and vocational planning. Many participants that took the Self-Directed Search test reported that it allowed them to explore occupations that they may not have considered prior to taking the test. Several participants were able to identify and plan strategies for the following; vocational rehabilitation, completing financial aid forms for post secondary education, preparing a resume, interviewing and entering the world of work.

During the summer session workshop, participants have been given the opportunity to assess goals and specific needs that they may have. One very useful device that that was used during the sessions was the Myers-Briggs which allowed the participants not only to look at themselves but afforded them the opportunity to understand where their special strengths are, what kinds of work they might enjoy and be successful doing, and how people with different preferences can relate to each other and be valuable in society.

Class sessions focused on self-assessment, goal-setting, decision making, stress and time management, projecting a positive image, formulating a good work ethic and resume and letter writing. Participants were exposed to professionals working in various occupations through weekly "Career Days." Areas explored included the healthcare industry, education, law enforcement, retail and business and nontraditional roles for women in the workplace.

Materials utilized included video tapes, handouts, worksheets, workbooks and overheads purchased with the grant monies. Participants also had access to a resource library of books and additional videos they checked out for their own use. The Learning Resource Center provided participants the opportunity to develop new skills as well as refine existing skills. Many spent afternoons in the Center working with tutors on basic skills or learning to use various computer programs. As referenced in their letters, the workshop helped them realize they are qualified and able to do many jobs; however simply needed assistance in focusing their attention on their positive attributes and abilities.

The training sessions closed with participants expressing a sense of pride, accomplishment and a greater knowledge of resources regarding both self and the necessary processes for transforming and meeting the diverse challenges of family, education and career while "Breaking Into the 90"s."

Participants were awarded individual certificates of achievement. Appropriate referral sources, contacts and follow-up data information were also issued as part of closure.

The Oasis Club, which stands for Once Again Students in School, was formed this year by one of our homemakers for non-traditional students in school. This is a support group for older students who are returning to school after an absence of several years. Some of the goals of this support club are to help one another through positive reinforcement, encouragement, support and sharing. Some of the topics that have been discussed were social events, single parenting, career changes, aging parents, divorce issues, and enriching lives through positive thinking. This club was played an active role in our local Education Day which was held at the Pennyrile Mall.

Our center additionally provided information for a three-part seminar, Investing in Your Self. This seminar was very beneficial for several of our participants who are just beginning careers or for those women who wish to invest for future security, invest in affordable transportation and invest in a business wardrobe.

In addition, our office has continued to administer the Kentucky Career Information System (KCIS) test for individuals, who are undecided in relation to their employment goals. Each individual who is tested is given a computer printout analyzing their career potential and the projected occupational growth. The KCIS is an excellent software program to be used for non-traditional participant career search.

Participant placement was increasingly successful this year. Several of our single parent/homemakers have secured employment due to the efforts of the center. One participant took a giant step and opened her own business. Linda Mayes, who attended our entrepreneur workshop, made the decision to open her own floral business. Our latest information indicates that Linda is becoming self sufficient and does not have to rely on her grown children for financial support. Tammy Foster, a single parent, has been employed by the Census Bureau with an hourly rate of $5.50. Mary Higgins, a non-traditional student, is employed at a real estate office and maintains that she would like to obtain her real estate license due to the exposure of this office. Mary maintains she now possesses self-confidence due to the classes she attended on confidence building. Shirley Barber, a single parent, has been placed with the Human Relations Commission as a field worker. This position was secured by joint efforts of our office in coordination with other community agencies. Several of our participants have completed the two-year RN program and have been very successful in securing very productive employment in the service delivery area.

We are very proud of Christina Harris, who won the Roundtable Student Poetry Award with her selection of "Memory of Jeffrey". (See attachment 1) Christina wishes to pursue a career in journalism and is actively working toward this goal. Christina, who is the mother of three young children, maintains it would have been impossible for her to return to college without the assistance of our program. She has attended several of the workshops and knows she is on the road to self-sufficiency and has the confidence needed to reach her goals.

Ongoing services offered by the Center included resume writing, interviewing techniques, personal and motivational counseling. Individual counseling is available on an as needed basis or when the staff deems necessary and will continue in this manner.

PLANS:

Plans are being made for our second year of regional outreach services. We plan to meet with our advisory committee and decide what would be the most effective plan of action during the upcoming year. We plan the continuation of support to participants who are already enrolled are who will be enrolled this year.

We, at the Creative Horizons Center, will continue to offer support on an informal basis as well as a formal basis. We will work closely with the college and other community agencies in the outreach counties to provide a variety of training for the target groups of single parents and homemakers.

We plan to provide follow up on all outreach participants to provide additional support once they have entered the job market (Job Retention Workshops and Materials). Support workshops are often helpful to the participants who enter the job market and who may be in need of a different type of support once they are on their way to becoming self-sufficient.

CHANGES: (Programmatic)

To provide more regional workshops so that all regional project directors will have an uniform guideline for planning their years activities. It is our recommendation that several shorter workshops be conducted rather than the two-week workshops for four hours a day. Many times it is difficult for people to commit for the entire two weeks. If workshops were of shorter duration, we believe we could focus on a much larger group of participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Our recommendations for this year would be continued support so that all individuals who qualify as either single parent or homemakers may have the opportunity to enhance their life skills. Provide a child-care facility at Hopkinsville Community so that single parents make take advantage of the workshops that are

offered at the institutions and other closely located training facilities.

Christina Harris

MEMORY OF JEFFREY

Jeffrey and I used to travel outside
Walking across sun-splashed fields
And squishy swamplands
To the creek, which wound like a snake
Through my backyard
And crept, stealthily, into the woods
To which mother forbade me to go

We went anyway, Jeffrey and I
Weaving and creeping as furtively as the creek
Looking over our shoulders
Trying not to be seen
But we needn't have worried
We were never seen, never discovered
We thought we were so clever

We sneaked to the woods, following the stream
Sometimes we walked, taking our time
Sometimes we skipped merrily along
Jeffrey skipped so much faster than I
I nearly had to run to keep up
He was a boy, and seven besides
My last cake had only five candles

We went to a cool shady clearing in the woods
That was blessed with only token light
It was cool and moist and private
It was dark, but I was not afraid
Jeffrey was there and he made me brave
He showed me how the sun sparkled on the stream
Turning it into a sea of mirrors

Our stream was not for swimming
It was for barefoot treading
And for tadpoles to swim
As we stepped, they tickled our feet
Our giggles rang through the clearing
We'd catch them, wiggling in our hands
They'd slip, like time through our fingers

All one summer we laughed and learned together
Thinking ourselves forever inseparable
But Fall came, and Cub Scouts and Little League
They stole my Jeffrey from me
I never went back to the stream after that
The light was gone from our happy place
Like the tadpoles, he escaped, and swam away

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Here is a bit of philosophy worth Sharing.

Today is mine.
It is unique.
Nobody in the world has one
exactly like it.
It holds the sum of all my past
experiences and all my future potential.
I can fill it with joyous moments or ruin
it with fruitless worry.
If painful recollections of the past come into
my mind, or frightening thoughts of
the future, I can put them away.
They cannot spoil today for me.

Positive Thinker

July 12, 1990

Dear Joyce,

Only in Hopkinsville will you find a "Jobs and You" worked filled with approximately 16 persons being taught by Betty Adams. The Common Bond that was shared by all was the lack of employment or the lack of fulfilling employment. From the older German lady to the attractive younger woman with the Spanish name, the opportunity of meeting others caught in the same situation was excerised by all. There were many lasting friendships made during these past 6 weeks.

I found the sessions uplifting and encouraging. I used to call them my daily "booster shot".

After being tested, I learned what my strongest abilities are and what job field to choose. As already assumed, my strongest abilities were in the clerical and computer field. Following these guidelines, I have been scheduled for the state examation of Secretary chief in August. In September, I will be tested for computer trainee. My desire is to become a Computer operator. If additional

Schooling is necessary, that will be worked into my plans.

Also, I must brag on Sharon Alexander. The lesson on the different types of personalities was most informative. After listening to Sharon's lectured, I formed a more positive opinion of myself.

It's such a shame that more people didn't take advantage of this free workshop. The only cost of the individual was 3 hours daily in time.

The free materials given to me have been a great benefit. I know I will refer to these periodically in the future.

The outcome of the workshop was that I obtained employment through proper contacts. I am presently employed at the Best Western Hotel in the position of front desk clerk.

Thank you very much for the workshop.

Sincerely,

Alice Greene

Jaquita B Wheeler
PO Box 963
Elkton, Ky 42220
(270) 265-2171

To Whom it may Concern:

Since I've been attending the workshop I have learned a whole lot about myself. I had alot of problems dealing with my feelings and emotions. I didn't know anything about presenting myself on a job interview, or what to say to people I didn't know.

Betty Adams is one of the nicest people I've ever met. She is one of many at the school that was nice to me. Betty really helped me, where no one else could. I wish that someone like Betty was at my school to counsel teenagers with their problems. I believe I wouldn't have had as many problems if I had some where to go for help.

If I don't move, I plan on attending the fall classes, majoring in business.

Sincerely Yours,
Jaquita B Wheeler

Elisabeth Letts
804 Whispering Hill Drive
Hopkinsville, KY 42240

7-10-90

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On completion of the six week workshop, Jobs and You through the Creative Horizons office at Hopkinsville Community College, I would like you to know, that it was real informative and educational. Since I had no experience with computers, I'm happy to say that I now have an idea how to operate a wordprocessor. The staff has been real nice, and helpful. I learned to write a resume and a follow-up letter. I also did Alge-Blaster tutorial program on the computer. It was fun. Betty Adams is a jewel in her profession, very supportive of her students. As I'm working towards my G.E.D, I also improved my English. I feel more confident than ever before. I attended the Adult Education Center in Christian County during the spring semester of 1990. My hat is off to all those teachers, I came in contact with. I personally believe that the peoples tax money is well spent on these educational programs.

Sincerely, yours

Elisabeth Letts

July 12th,1990

Subject; "Jobs And You" (6 weeks work-shop, Hopkinsville Community College, summer 1990)

To Whom It May Concern

Please accept my sincere thanks for allowing me take part in above referenced work-shop. I thoroughly enjoyed ever session and learned so much about not only myself but about others as well. I also learned a great deal about the current day job market and availability of jobs to non-degreed persons such as myself. Our instructor, Betty Adams should be highly commended for her patience, presentation of material and determination to see that each participant walked away with more knowledge of the subject than we came with.

I particularly enjoyed Career Day. The selection of speakers was excellent.

I learned their is a whole world of employment out there for people just like myself who are willing and able but sometimes like the self esteem and confidence to give it a try. In this work-shop we were told to set short term goals as well as long term goals. I feel I have reached the short terms goals set for myself and will in time reach my long time goals. My degree of self-confidence was greatly improved as a result of this work-shop and I was given knowledge of job opportunities I never thought possible without a degree. We discussed what to say and what not to say on job interviews, touched briefly on computer word processing and other aspects of the business world. I have definitely learned to be more assertive about myself.

As for the future; I presently have 2 job possibilities developed as a result of the work-shop and am seeking others. If nothing comes through by fall I will take additional classes at Hopkinsville Community College and do volunteer work of some kind.

Sincerely,

Linda H Summers

Linda H. Summers
309 Hillaire Dr.
Hopkinsville, KY 42240